

VZCZCXRO3649
PP RUEHDBU RUEHPW
DE RUEHBUL #0891/01 0991106
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 091106Z APR 09 ZDK
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8314
INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KABUL 000891

SIPDIS

KABUL FOR COS USFOR-A
STATE FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, S/CRS
STATE PASS TO USAIF FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG
NSC FOR JWOOD
OSD FOR MCGRAW
CG CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCENT

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [AF](#)
SUBJECT: REVIEWING THE CANDIDATE NOMINATION PROCESS

REF: A. KABUL 307
[1](#)B. 2008 KABUL 3197

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[1](#)1. SUMMARY. On April 25, the nomination period opens for Presidential and Provincial Council candidates (ref A). All candidates for the August 2009 elections must register before the May 8 closure. In preparation, the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) has revealed its plans for implementing this phase of the electoral process. Coordination on transporting of materials and security support is progressing between the IEC, Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and ISAF. END SUMMARY.

PREPARING FOR CANDIDATE NOMINATIONS

[1](#)2. In the lead-up to the nomination period, materials and staff are flowing into the IEC's Kabul headquarters. Over 100 newly recruited IEC staff for both headquarters and the field will receive process and procedure training April 11-13. Employee training manuals on the registration process are printed and the IEC has preapproved symbols for use by registering candidates. Procurement of nomination materials and equipment from domestic sources continues with delivery scheduled April 10-15. Although no delays are currently anticipated, the IEC reports that back-up options are in place should scheduled deliveries fail to materialize. The IEC will have five days to consolidate the materials and prepare personnel for departure to the 34 provincial offices. Each team will consist of three data entry clerks with three laptops, two printers, one scanner, two camera kits and a candidate registration box. Based on population size and the expected number of registering candidates, Nangarhar and Herat will have two teams each; everywhere else will operate with one team per province.

SECURITY COORDINATION

[1](#)3. On April 20, the candidate nomination teams are scheduled to begin deploying. The IEC has provided a concept plan for movement and transportation to the Joint Security Planning Group (JSPG), the main security planning coordination mechanism. Through the JSPG, overall responsibility for security of candidate nomination material delivery has been assigned to the Afghan National Police. All ANSF and ISAF forces, with input from the IEC, are collaborating on support of the movements and filling gaps in ANP assets. Teams and materials will travel to Kandahar, Balkh and Herat by air, with ground movement convoys handling transit to other provinces. Consensus exists between the IEC, UNDP and stakeholders that the JSPG will finalize the transportation

and security plan this week.

THE NOMINATION PROCESS

¶4. Presidential candidates must register in person at the IEC's Kabul headquarters. To register, potential candidates must demonstrate eligibility for the office for which they are running and provide supporting documentation of the criteria established in the Constitution and Electoral law. Presidential candidates must be at least 40 years old and demonstrate that they are Muslim, Afghan citizens not holding dual nationality. They cannot have convictions for crimes against humanity, criminal acts or deprivation of civil rights by a court. In addition, they must demonstrate proof of voter registration, deposit 50,000 Afs (USD 1,050) and submit names, signatures (or thumbprints) and voter registration card numbers of 10,000 voters supporting their candidacy. The deposit is refundable if a candidate receives at least 15% of the total valid votes. The additional criteria suggested by IEC Chairman Dr. Ludin has not been implemented at this time nor is it expected prior to the start of the candidate registration process.

¶5. Provincial Council (PC) candidates must register in the province in which they are standing for office (ref B). A PC candidate must be at least 18 years old and have held Afghan citizenship for a minimum of 10 years. They must deposit 4,000 Afs (USD 85) and put forward names, signatures (or thumbprints) and voter registration card numbers of 200 supporting voters resident in the province of candidacy. The deposit is refundable if a candidate receives at least 2% of the total valid votes.

AFTERMATH

¶6. During the nomination process, data collected on

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candidates will be transmitted electronically to the IEC's Kabul headquarters from the provincial offices. Difficulties in the registration process should be promptly reported to the IEC's operations center. Each Provincial Office will develop a schedule for the return of registration materials to Kabul in coordination with headquarters. The data entry staff will remain with the material until it is retrieved, helping to ensure integrity of the materials. Overall, the IEC's coordination with key partners appears to be creating an implementable Afghan-led process for candidate registration.

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